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ABSTRACT

There is much to be read and said about the value of group counselling. The central purpose of this paper is not to convince someone of the merits of group work but rather to describe a group counselling model which has met with some success. The Pyramid Problem Solving Model is based on a series of tasks which, if completed, propose to aid the client to see his concerns as less ambiguous and confused and more specific and concrete; he will see himself as less helpless and powerless and more in a position of control over the responses he is receiving from his environment; he will see himself as less apart from his school and more a part of his peers and school. (Author)

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THE PYRAMID PROBLEM SOLVING MODEL

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INTRODUCTION

There seems to be growing interest in group counselling. There is much to be read and said about the value of group counselling. The central purpose of this paper is not to convince someone of the merits of group work but rather to describe a group counselling model which has met with some success.

In this sense I assume to be preaching to the converted in that the listeners are already convinced of the merits of group counselling but could appreciate a workable model to follow.

The Pyramid Problem Solving Model (see Appendix A) is based on a series of tasks, which if completed, propose to aid the client to see his concerns as less ambiguous and confused and more specific and concrete; he will see himself as less helpless and powerless and more in a position of control over the responses he is receiving from his environment; he will see himself as less apart from his school and more a part of his peers and school.

I THE RATIONALE

The wealth of material on the subject of counselling attests to the commonly held belief that man is a social being. This assumption is made by the theorists who advance individual counselling as well as by those who present a rationale for group counselling.

Although it can be argued that the one-on-one individual counselling is a social interaction which meets the needs of individuals as social beings, it might better be argued that the group experience is more common and more natural than the individual counselling experience. As Gary S. Belkin suggests,

> "The group experience... fits unobstrusely into the normal school day pattern... The counselling group, moreover, as a basic social unit, recapitulates other primary groups in which we interact: the family, the class, our peer group, the scouts, religious groups..." [1]

The rationale for group counselling appears to be deeply rooted in the nature of human beings and their social relationships.

James C. Hansen reiterates,

> "Personality is largely the product of interaction with other significant human beings. The need of men and women to be closely related to others thus seems as basic as any biological need and essential to their survival." [2]

The desire for intimacy, relatedness, care and affection are natural and not unusual. Previously people came together naturally to talk and share themselves in a spontaneous manner. People lived closer together, forming communities of various kinds. But Alvin Toffler would have us believe that times have changed and that part of our "throw-away society" [3] is involved in short-duration throw-away relationships.

Relationships are approached and discarded as one would purchase and dispose a cigarette carton.

The necessity now for formulating groups to meet in a somewhat structured manner is an indication that society has changed and often is unable to meet the needs of its people. The group experience affords the participants an opportunity to discuss matters of concern to themselves and also to establish genuine and meaningful relationships.

In a school setting the group approach appears to be more economical than the individual approach; economical in terms of conservation of time, the counsellors most precious commodity. It can well be demonstrated that a counsellor can more effectively serve a larger student body if he counsels in groups. Moreover, he then also has more time to serve the students whose needs require individual counselling.

As already suggested a group is more typical of social reality and thus more compatable with the nature of man. This has two important implications: (1) It enables the counsellor to study the patterns of the clients social interactions and (2) it facilitates the client's socialization. The counsellor is presented with a real-life opportunity to study the client in his social milieu. This is especially important in helping clients whose concerns are a result of social difficulties. The client is presented with a type of reality in which he can test himself. He can try on behaviors in a climate of acceptance. He can risk being someone he has never been before.

Another advantage of the group is that by bringing together many different people with different backgrounds, personalities and experiences, it provides a reservoir of insights, perceptions and

emotional responses that a single counsellor could not possibly provide. The counsellor has at his disposal a wide range of responses which he can choose to encourage for the benefit of the clients. In an individual encounter, only the feelings, perceptions and experiences of the counsellor are available to the client.

A final advantage of the group approach is that a group parallels more closely the classroom setting. Because the client is accustomed to functioning in a group, less resistance appears if he is placed in a counselling group than if extracted from the group and asked to interact alone with the counsellor. Much of the mystery and stigma attached to individual counselling disappears in the group setting.

Belkan[4] has discussed some of the previously stated advantages but also points out some disadvantages to group counselling. For instance, some clients find it difficult to speak in a group, others regress in a peer group. Individuals who require intensive long-term counselling may demand a single dynamic relationship and would probably not find the group therapeutic.

Group counselling is not a panacea for all human ills but it does meet the needs of many students and many school counsellors.

II THE PROCESS

Kelman[5] suggested three types of behavior, that are required within the counselling experience, for behavior change to occur:

(a) engaging in the counselling process
(b) commitment to the purposes of the group
(c) internalizing of behavior modifying experiences

Engaging in the Counselling Process

Most individuals approach a group with ambivalent feelings. They would like to improve their behavior but are frightened about the experience. Perhaps more accurately, they would like the consequences of different behaviors but are afraid to change. The counsellor helps the individual deal with these ambivalent feelings by communicating that they are common and appropriate and that feelings are open for discussion. The counsellor is actively involved by responding selectively, by interpreting and confronting.

Commitment to the Purpose

Individuals must be personally committed to the group purpose for real behavior change to occur. Clients must be motivated to stay with the group. Hansen suggests,

> "The concept of volition and consent are particularly important. An effective group functions only in terms of the volition and consent of its members and those who are involuntary members would not explore themselves in a group and would not be open to feedback concerning themselves."[6]

Where a person feels totally accepted in spite of obvious deficiencies, their commitment to the purpose comes easily. When an individual recognizes the similarities between his own needs and the needs of others in the group a common bond emerges.

New Behavior Patterns

Engaging in the counselling process and committing oneself to the purpose is important, but for behavior change to occur the client must internalize a new, more realistic pattern. With the group as the

testing ground, new knowledge and new understandings develop into new behaviors. When an individual exhibits his old behavior pattern he can be confronted not only with their self-defeating nature but also with the reaction that these behavior patterns elicit in other people.

This paper is more concerned with the establishing of new behavior patterns than with the group counselling process.

III THE GROUP

a. A Description

The description of the individuals in a group has a strong controlling effect on how the counsellor proceeds. If the counsellor believes the needs of the individuals to be primarily relatedness, then that becomes the purpose of the group. If the counsellor believes the needs to be primarily behavioral, then that controls the way in which the counsellor proceeds. The description of the individuals governs what the counsellor does and how he does it.

To illustrate this model as specifically and concretely as possible the group is assumed to be that of low achieving students who would like to improve their academic performance. The model has been used with groups of various descriptions (eg. poor attendance, interpersonal difficulties). As a problem solving model it has met with some success in groups with varying concerns.

The following statements characterize the individual group members:

> Most individuals want to be academically successful, most of the time.

Poor habits, which may be responsible for low achievement, were acquired over a long period of time.

Improving ones academic performance in school is a complex task. It requires a great number of skills.

The belief system of an individual governs his behavior.

Low academic achievers believe the task of performing well is too difficult and therefore perceive it to be out of their capabilities.

An individual might believe a complicated task is too difficult, but could perceive a simple task (which is part of a complicated task) to be within his capabilities.

A person will change his behavior if he believes the change is worth the effort.

The reward, for the task performance, must be implicit in the task. That is, the task completion must be reward in itself.

Much time and energy is wasted on blaming the poor results of an individual's performance on factors outside of himself.

Placing the blame on factors outside of an individual's control leads only to further unsuccessful experiences.

The belief that an individual is able to control the outcome of his behavior is essential to the change of behavior.

Individuals who are low achievers feel alienated and lack relatedness.

A sense of belonging is essential to the change of behavior.

Individuals can be given a sense of belonging in a group.

b. Setting

Setting factors include such items as where the group will meet, what kind of furnishings the room will have (tables, chairs, rug, room for movement), open or closed area, audio-visual equipment. Not many counsellors are in a position to furnish a room to their taste and therefore many of these decisions are made for them.

It is important that the counsellor not pay attention to the setting to the extent that he lose interest in group counselling if the setting is not ideal.

Group counselling has been known to have taken place on stairways, in hallways in open guidance areas, in gymnasiums, art rooms and on stage. These are not ideal, but at times the reality of school space makes certain limitations on where counselling is held.

It is highly desirable that the group setting be held constant. That is, that the group meet in the same place for each session.

c. Group Size

A consensus of the literature, based largely on experience of group leaders rather than on empirical research, suggests that the ideal size is seven or eight. Too small a group prohibits the utilization of group dynamics. Too large a group fosters the formation of subgroup and increases the competition for "air-time".

A counsellor might expect one or two members to drop out. Therefore it is adviseable to start a group slightly larger than the ideal size.

d. Group Selection

Selection procedures are determined to some degree by the purpose of the group. However, certain procedures can be generalized.

Group members who are aware of the purpose of the group, aware of group format and who are interested in and volunteer for the sessions are good prospects. A method for screening the candidates is the one-on-one interview.

Another method, which gives the members an immediate immersion, is to invite individuals to the group "cold" and then discuss the group purpose and format: giving the members the option of volunteering or dropping out.

e. Group Composition

The literature would suggest that homogeneous groups (sex, age, socio-economic level or problem area) become cohesive more quickly, have better attendance, less conflicts and offer more immediate support to each other.

The group which this paper describes is homogeneous with respect to the problem area. All individuals were low achievers (average 45-55).

The low achievers are invited to participate in a group experience, the purpose of which is to improve their academic performance. The clients can accept or refuse the invitation.

f. Session Frequency

It seems preferable for groups to meet frequently enough to keep interest and motivation at a high level. However, if the sessions

are too frequent it may not allow the individuals enough time to work through their tasks. One session per week seems to be a workable timetable.

g. Duration of Session

It seems adviseable to work within the framework of the school system. Where periods are from 40-70 minutes in duration, one period per session is functional.

h. Length of the Experience

The group can most effectively work towards closure when the limits are known at the outset. The decision as to the number of sessions must be made bearing in mind the following factors: the purpose of the group and counsellor time, school timetable, examinations and vacations etc.

This model is based on a 10-12 session experience.

i. Group Purpose

Group purposes are varied. Generally, the more specific and concrete the purpose is to the group and the counsellor the more likely the goals will be realized.

The purpose must initially be defined by the counsellor and then clarified by the group at various intervals. Regular assessments can be made by the counsellor and the group as the experience progresses.

Hansen[7] suggests a variety of purposes:

1. Information
2. Specific academic or work skills
3. Decision making skills
4. Interpersonal and social skills
5. Specific fears and anxieties
6. Intrapersonal difficulties

The model Pyramid Problem Solving Model fits into the categories of Specific work skills and Decision making skills.

IV THE TASKS

Based on the description of group members (above III, a), it would appear that three principles account for the low achievement of the group members.

Principle One

> Clients achieve poorly because they believe that there is little they can do to change the outcome. They perceive themselves as being without control. They believe their lack of success is a result of forces beyond their control (forces such as fate and powerful others).

Principle Two

> Clients achieve poorly because they perceive the task of improving ones performance is so complicated and difficult that they prefer to endure the consequences of low achievement to attempting to cope with the task of improving their performance.

Principle Three

> Clients achieve poorly because they perceive themselves as alienated from their peers, apart from the social structure of the school and apart from the tasks that the school would have them perform.

a. Task One

Introduction to the Pyramid

The first task is that of helping the client gain an understanding of the Pyramid Problem Solving Model. At the base of the pyramid is the confused and complicated concerns related to academic achievement. The client is probably confused about what to do and how

to do it. Feelings of fear and inferiority along with a perception of being alone appears to be at the heart of the problem. As the individuals work their way (task by task) up the side of the pyramid they will come to understand that there are some specific activities which they can perform, which will help them in their achievement. The group members will realize that they are not alone in their feelings about themselves and their school. They will understand that others have the same problems and that it is O.K. to feel helpless. You can be accepted by others just the way you are.

Germaine to the success of this group is the interest each group member has in improving his performance. Understandably most students are not content with an average of 45-55, however they must be discontented to the point of risking a change of behavior. Where the group provides a climate of minimal risk and the alternative behaviors are made specific and concrete, there the option of behavior change may become too attractive for the clients to refuse.

b. Task Two

The second task is that of listing factors which each individual believes would contribute to anyone being a low achiever. There is little threat in a discussion of factors which could apply to anyone. The clients are asked to volunteer one factor from their list.

It may be that some or all of the factors discussed in the group apply to each of the individuals and that the list each person has represents the base of the pyramid... a confusion of ideas and feelings about oneself and ones work.

The goals of task two are threefold. Firstly, it is the first

step at making the clients' concerns concrete. This is achieved by writing the concerns out, black on white. Secondly it serves the purpose of allowing group members to share themselves. Clients soon discover that they have concerns which are very similar to others. Thirdly, it is an attempt at getting everyone involved in the process.

c. Task Three

The clients are asked to refer to their previous task and discriminate between the factors which, in their estimation, can be changed and the factors which they believe cannot be changed.

The importance of the ability to discriminate between these two categories is worth noting. The feelings which are attached to focusing on factors which cannot be changed are helplessness, hopelessness, weakness, frustration, inferiority, and the like. Feelings which are attached to focusing on factors which can be changed are strength, a sense of hope, power and a general positive feeling about oneself.

Much time and energy is wasted when focusing on factors which cannot be changed. Focusing on factors which can be altered is an inspiring, hopeful experience.

The primary purpose of this task is to learn the importance of discriminating between the two categories. Factors which cannot be changed are largely external to the clients. Factors which can be changed are generally internal to the clients. This is a significant step. Clients must see themselves as capable of influencing their environment if any change is to come about. Thus the client may come to see himself as less helpless and more in control.

d. Task Four

The individuals are asked to list the factors which they feel are responsible for their own low achievement. The difference between this task and task two is that they now relate specifically to themselves.

The purpose of this task is to make their personal concerns concrete and specific. Another purpose of this task is to help the clients begin the process of focusing on themselves rather than on the external environment. The sharing of the factors, once more, helps the clients see the commonalities in the group.

e. Task Five

The individuals are now asked to discriminate between the factors which they believe they can change and those factors which they believe they cannot change. The group once more discusses the importance of this discrimination. Being able to place the blame for one's low achievement on the teacher or the subject area or the class may alleviate one's anxiety for a short period of time but it does not lead to success or bring one a sense of worth over a long period of time. If a client is truly interested in better performance he must focus on factors which he believes he can change.

From this point on individuals focus on factors which in their estimation they can change. This does not suggest that the factors in the cannot-change category should be ignored, but it does suggest that the focus should be on the can-change factors.

f. Task Six

Clients are asked to rank the factors in the can-change category in the following manner. The highest priority is given to the factor which they believe will affect their academic performance the most. The lowest priority is given to the factor which they believe will affect their academic performance the least.

The group members have now individually arrived at a single factor which each client believes he can alter but which also will affect his academic performance.

The clients have moved up the pyramid from the ambiguous confusing state at the base to a single concrete behavior which the individual believes he can alter to improve his performance.

g. Task Seven

Clients are asked to list a variety of ways in which he can carry out task six. Task six answered the question, "What can you do?" Task seven and eight answer the question, "How will you do it?"

h. Task Eight

Clients are asked to rank order the list of task seven. The highest priority is to be given to the method which the client feels would be most successful bearing in mind that he must also be willing to do it. The lowest priority is to be given to the method which the client feels would be least successful or which he would least prefer.

The key to success at this point is to have each client write in concrete terms how he intends to carry out his task. Every other task has been described and shared in the group. This is the first task

which must be completed outside of the group. The day, time of day, place, persons, manner and exact words used must be given. The group members role play and rehearse the task in the group.

The degree of success outside of the group depends on the extent to which the clients are specific and concrete in the group.

i. Task Nine

Clients commit themselves to carry out the task they have described. This may be in the form of a verbal commitment or a written contract; both are effective.

j. Task Ten

Inspite of the time taken in arriving at the specific task and inspite of the care taken in clarifying the exact manner in which the task is carried out, some clients discover that they have been overly ambitious in their commitments. Therefore the task is in need of revision. The inability to complete a task does not constitute a serious problem. Group members have learned to appreciate each other as individuals and can now become of special help to each other.

The task is revised and rehearsed in the same manner in which the original task was accomplished.

Some clients will have committed themselves to a task which has been too simple and not challenging enough. These clients can immediately move ahead in the description committing themselves to another task in an effort to solve the same concern or another concern.

The goal of this group is for the clients to learn the problem solving method in the group. It is believed that after some guided

experience the clients will be able to continue to use this method outside of the group for academic and other concerns.

To the extent that clients are able to apply the pyramid problem solving model to other concerns in their life and become autonomous, to that extent the group experience has been successful.

V THE GROUP ASSESSMENT

At the conclusion of the group experience it is valuable for the counsellor to receive responses from the clients on their experience in the group.

Irvin D. Yalom[8] (see Appendix B) suggests twelve different areas in which clients report growth as a result of group counselling. He states that the following curative factors develop.

1. Altruism
2. Cohesiveness
3. Universality
4. Interpersonal Learning
5. Intrapersonal Learning
6. Guidance
7. Catharsis
8. Identification
9. Family Re-Actment
10. Insight
11. Instillation of Hope
12. Existential Factors

That these factors developed is reflected in the responses from individual group members.

One client writes, "It helped me to learn to talk with people and discuss things about ourselves and how to deal with it."

Another client writes, "Now I know that there are many other students in the school who are having the very same difficulties I'm having."

Another says, "If we were having problems in some classes, we would tell the group and they would help us by giving us suggestions."

The sessions appeared to have some effect on their sense of belonging. The group members expressed more feelings of concern for each other as the experience proceeded.

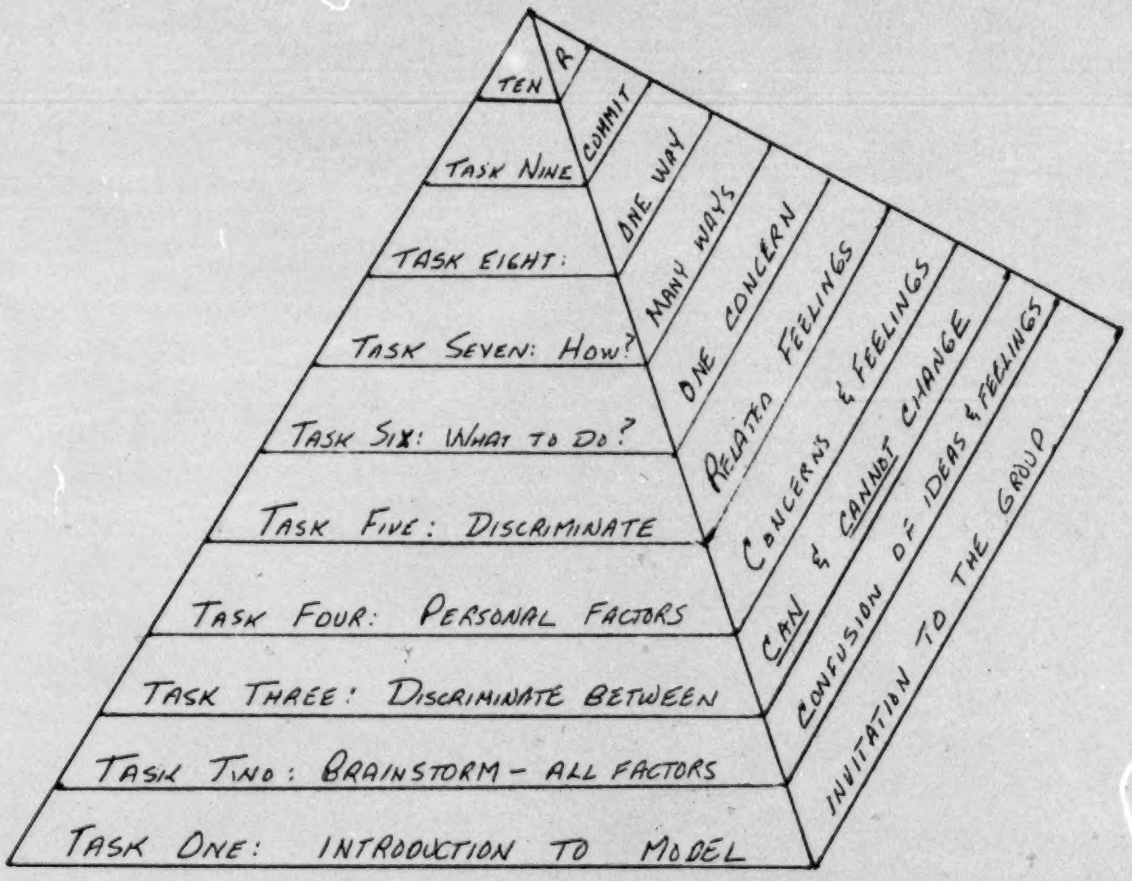
The teachers of the clients who participated in the groups were asked to complete a Student Assessment Form (Appendix C). In one school teachers for all seventeen participating students responded. The assessment forms indicated that teachers had noted a positive change in fourteen of the seventeen participating students.

There were ten students for whom at least two teachers reported a positive change. There were seven students for whom at least three teachers reported a positive change. There were two students for whom at least four teachers reported a positive change.

In many cases the changes reported by the teachers were in keeping with the commitments the clients had made in the group. One teacher reports, "has improved mainly because, I think, he is staying away from B. H. in science." This was in keeping with the client's commitment.

Another group member committed herself to doing, "a full thirty minutes of Mathematics per day," outside of class work. Her teacher of Mathematics reports, "... her results as far as day to day work goes are more noticeable and I feel she is pleased about this."

A group member who previously had wasted a lot of class time, now, according to his teacher was "trying to improve his mark and is coming in the shop during his spares." He seemed to realize that success in that subject was within his reach if he applied himself.


TEN
A
TASK NINE
COMMIT
TASK EIGHT:
ONE WAY
TASK SEVEN: HOW?
MANY WAYS
TASK SIX: WHAT TO DO?
ONE CONCERN
TASK FIVE: DISCRIMINATE
RELATED FEELINGS
TASK FOUR: PERSONAL FACTORS
CONCERNS & FEELINGS
TASK THREE: DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN
CAN & CANNOT CHANGE
TASK TWO: BRAINSTORM - ALL FACTORS
CONFUSION OF IDEAS & FEELINGS
TASK ONE: INTRODUCTION TO MODEL
INVITATION TO THE GROUP

APPENDIX "A"

Another group member committed herself to doing her schoolwork each evening prior to going out. Her increased interest in her work resulted in a different behavior pattern and her teacher reported, "(she) does not seem to be skipping nearly so many classes."

CONCLUSION

There appears to be some evidence that the group experience had some effect on the members attitudes and behaviors. The student and teacher assessments seem to indicate that some of the clients changed in the direction of less helplessness and more control and less alienation and more relatedness. They also seemed to develop a greater sense of responsibility for their academic success by applying the Pyramid Problem Solving Model to their particular concern.

Although their are many variables that cannot be controlled, and that changes in the clients need not necessarily be ascribed to the group experience, there does seem to be some evidence that the Pyramid Problem Solving Model holds some promise.

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APPENDIX "B"

CURATIVE FACTORS*

		RANK ORDER+
1.	Altrusim	
	1. Helping others has given me more self-respect.	40T (tie)
	2. Putting others' needs ahead of mine.	52T
	3. Forgetting myself and thinking of helping others.	37T
	4. Giving part of myself to others.	17
	5. Helping others and being important in their lives.	33T
2.	Group cohesiveness	
	6. Belonging to and being accepted by a group.	16
	7. Continued close contact with other people.	20T
	8. Revealing embarrassing things about myself and still being accepted by the group.	11T
	9. Feeling alone no longer.	37T
	10. Belonging to a group of people who understood and accepted me.	20T
3.	Universality	
	11. Learning I'm not the only one with my type of problem; "We're all in the same boat."	45T
	12. Seeing that I was just as well off as others.	25T
	13. Learning that others have some of the same "bad" thoughts and feelings I do.	40T
	14. Learning that others had parents and backgrounds as unhappy or mixed up as mine.	31T
	15. Learning that I'm not very different from other people gave me a "welcome to the human race" feeling.	33T

+ Some of the items are nearly identical, but it was convenient methodologically to have the same number of items representing each category. The twelve categories are: altruism, group cohesiveness; universality; interpersonal learning "input"; interpersonal learning "output"; guidance; catharsis; identification; family re-enactment; insight; instillation of hope; existential factors. They are not quite identical to those described in this book; we attempted, unsuccessfully, to divide interpersonal learning into two parts - input and output. The category "insight", poorly labeled, was included to permit examination of the importance of derepression and genetic insight. "Existential factors" was included at the suggestion of several colleagues.

* From The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy, by Irvine D. Yalom. New York; Basic Books, Inc., 1970. Pp. 66-69. Reprinted by permission.

		RANK ORDER
4.	Interpersonal learning, "input"	
	16. The group's teaching me about the type of impression I make on others.	5T
	17. Learning how I come across to others.	8
	18. Other members honestly telling me what they think of me.	3
	19. Group members pointing out some of my habits or mannerisms that annoy other people.	18T
	20. Learning that I sometimes confuse people by not saying what I really think.	13T
5.	Interpersonal learning, "output"	
	21. Improving my skills in getting along with people.	25T
	22. Feeling more trustful of groups and of other people.	10
	23. Learning about the way I related to the other group members.	13T
	24. The group's giving me an opportunity to learn to approach others.	27T
	25. Working out my difficulties with one particular member in the group.	33T
6.	Guidance	
	26. The doctor's suggesting or advising something for me to do.	27T
	27. Group members suggesting or advising something for me to do.	55
	28. Group members telling me what to do.	56
	29. Someone in the group giving definite suggestions about a life problem.	48T
	30. Group members advising me to behave differently with an important person in my life.	52T
7.	Catharsis	
	31. Getting things off my chest.	31T
	32. Expressing negative and/or positive feelings toward another member.	5T
	33. Expressing negative and/or positive feelings toward the group leader.	18T
	34. Learning how to express my feelings.	4
	35. Being able to say what was bothering me instead of holding it in.	2

		RANK ORDER
8.	Identification	
	36. Trying to be like someone in the group who was better adjusted than I.	58
	37. Seeing that others could reveal embarrassing things and take other risks and benefit from it helped me to do the same.	8
	38. Adopting mannerisms or the style of another group member.	59
	39. Admiring and behaving like my therapist.	57
	40. Finding someone in the group I could pattern myself after.	60
9.	Family re-enactment	
	41. Being in the group was, in a sense, like reliving and understanding my life in the family in which I grew up.	51
	42. Being in the group somehow helped me to understand old hang-ups that I had in the past with my parents, brothers, sisters, or other important people.	30
	43. Being in the group was, in a sense, like being in a family, only this time a more accepting and understanding family.	44
	44. Being in the group somehow helped me to understand how I grew up in my family.	45T
	45. The group was something like my family - some members or the therapists being like my parents and others being like my relatives. Through the group experience I understand my past relationships with my parents and relatives (brothers, sisters, etc.)	48T
10.	"Insight"	
	46. Learning that I have likes or dislikes for a person for reasons which may have little to do with the person and more to do with my hang-ups or experiences with other people in my past.	15
	47. Learning why I think and feel the way I do (i.e., learning some of the causes and sources of my problems).	11T
	48. Discovering and accepting previously unknown or unacceptable parts of myself.	1

49. Learning that I react to some people or situations unrealistically (with feelings that somehow belong to earlier periods in my life.) 20T

50. Learning that how I feel and behave today is related to my childhood and development (there are reasons in my early life why I am as I am.) 50

11. Instillation of hope

51. Seeing others getting better was inspiring to me. 42T

52. Knowing others had solved problems similar to mine. 37T

53. Seeing that others had solved problems similar to mine. 33T

54. Seeing that other group members improved encouraged me. 27T

55. Knowing that the group had helped others with problems like mine encouraged me. 45T

12. Existential factors

56. Recognizing that life is at times unfair and unjust. 54

57. Recognizing that ultimately there is no escape from some of life's pain and from death. 42T

58. Recognizing that no matter how close I get to other people, I must still face life alone. 23T

59. Facing the basic issues of my life and death, and thus living my life more honestly and being less caught up in trivialities. 23T

60. Learning that I must take ultimate responsibility for the way I live my life no matter how much guidance and support I get from others. 5T